



Norazlinah (sixth left) with Dr Jimba (eighth left), Dr Kamarudin (seventh left), Dr Christina (fifth left) and the award recipients.

## APACPH Conference timely, beneficial: Shafie

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**Larry Ralon**

KOTA KINABALU: Malaysia has made impressive achievements in its effort to improve the health of its citizens as evidenced by the increase in life expectancy at birth over the years, said Chief Minister Datuk Seri Mohd Shafie Apdal.

Life expectancy at birth is one of the key health status indicators, he said, adding that good indicators of overall health system performance such as infant mortality rate and maternal mortality rate have been significantly reduced to levels that are comparable to those of developed nations.

"Thus, as a result, Malaysia indeed has one of the region's better performing healthcare systems. Malaysians enjoy a relatively high overall standard of health.

"We have an equitable and highly accessible public healthcare delivery system that has made tremendous health gains as well as comprehensive service coverage," he said when launching the 50th and Golden Jubilee Conference of Asia-Pacific Academic Consortium For Public Health (APACPH) at Magellan Sutera, here, Wednesday.

His speech was read by Assistant Health and People's Wellbeing Minister Norazlinah Arif. APACPH President Profes-

sor Dr Masamine Jimba, Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) Vice-Chancellor Prof Datuk Dr Kamarudin D Mudin and State Health Director Dr Christina Rundi, among others, were present.

Shafie said the country has also been successful in overcoming many types of communicable diseases, even though infectious diseases such as tuberculosis (TB), malaria, dengue fever, HIV/AIDS and others still pose a threat.

"Thus, the Asia-Pacific Academic Consortium for Public Health will be extremely beneficial to all the nations in the Asia-Pacific region.

"This conference has certainly contributed greatly towards enhancing regional capacity to improve the quality of life and to address major public health challenges," he said.

Shafie hoped the conference, themed "Milestone Event - Moving Forward to Address Challenges in Regional Health" will gather and disseminate the highest possible level of public health information which can benefit not only the Asia-Pacific countries but also the whole world.

He said progress in medicine often requires a change of mindset, an innovative mind that is willing to break down barriers that restrict progress.

"It is indeed timely that, with the APACPH 2018 Conference, stakeholders from all the disciplines in public health are coming together on one platform.

"There is a clear continuum scientific research and field practice in translational medicine.

"By consolidating multi-disciplinary efforts in public health, we can conduct better research, train better public health practitioners and achieve better health in this region," he said.

He said he is also well aware and trust that APACPH will be able to realise vision to achieve the highest possible level of health in all nations of the Asia-Pacific region.

The consortium has made it its mission to enhance regional capacity to improve the quality of life and to address major public health challenges through the delivery of education, research and population health services by its member institutions.

"Indeed this will be extremely beneficial to all the nations in the Asia-Pacific region, which includes Sabah, specifically, and Malaysia, in general," he said.

Norazlinah also represented Shafie in presenting APACPH 2018 awards to its members during the event.